

## Champions Freedom of the Press.

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time that solemn offerings are made with a view of insuring the horses' health ? What else is that ceremony of throwing a cross on a certain day into the Garonne, as if for propitiating Eridanus or Danubius, Nilus, or even old Father Oceanus himself, and inducing the waters of the river to flow in a calm and smooth course without overflowing its banks and so causing an inundation ? What is it but superstition, in the drought of summer and when rain is wanted, to cause the rotten trunks of certain statues to be carried about the streets by boys ? Yet this city, so ill instructed in the faith of Christ, pretends to impose its notions of Christianity upon all men, to regulate all religious matters according to its will, and to insult with the name of heretic every one who follows the commands of Christ with more freedom and according to their spirit, as though he had fallen away from the integrity and soundness of the faith."

Again, when the bigots of the Sorbonne had succeeded in in 1534-35 in capturing the fickle Francis I. and in getting an edict issued absolutely prohibiting the art of printing\* in France—an edict happily not put in execution—Dolct hesitated not to lash their stupidity and their bigotry with his ire and his scorn, " I cannot," he wrote in the first volume of his "Commentaries on the Latin Language," " pass over in silence the wickedness of those wretches, who, planning destruction to literature as to men of letters, thought in our time of destroying and putting an end to the exercise of the art of printing. Thought, clo I say ? Who actually used all their influence with the King of France, Francis of Valois himself, the guardian, the supporter, the most loving promoter of literature and of men of letters, to obtain a decree for its suppression. They used this pretext that literature was the means of propagating the Lutheran heresy, and that to this, typography was made subservient. Ridiculous race of fools ! As if arms were by themselves evil or destructive, and as if, because wounds and even death are inflicted by them, the use of those arms by which the good defend both themselves and their country from attacks ought to be suppressed ; it is only the wicked who use them for unjust purposes. So if there are those who, foolishly over-curious or factious, disseminate some error or other by means of the press, who is there who,